



# SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY

---

## MADRID CAMPUS

### **GVT 439 M1 - GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS IN THE 21st CENTURY**

#### **Course Information:**

**Catalog Description:** In the 20th century the general public became aware of the need for following a sustainable lifestyle. Non-governmental organizations, governmental institutions and individuals began to study environmental problems and issues to enhance the concept of conservation of nature and the protection of the planet's biodiversity among other important concepts. However, as we enter the 21st century, we are finding ourselves involved in new environmental threats such as increasingly disturbing natural disasters, eco-terrorism and endless extreme poverty. This course is aimed at learning the basic environmental aspects that affect society and nature as a whole, along with the new issues that are arising and leading scientists to continue new lines of research in the field of environmental conservation and awareness, knowing also that the key to hope lies in the field of environmental education.

**Instructor's Additional Course Description:** This course will provide the students with an overview of the global environmental challenges. From the starting point of international environmental consciousness, with the UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm 1972, until Rio+20, the last Earth Summit celebrated in 2012. The focus is environmental challenges from a social, political, economical, and ethical view. Main concepts as sustainable development, climate change, and Millennium Goals will be examined. Also the principal measures, opportunities and failures regarding environmental protection will be identified, trying to understand the central role of politics in all these processes.

**Credit Hours:** 4

This course follows the US Federal Government's Credit Hour definition: "An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutional established equivalence that reasonably approximates no less than:

- (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

For full up-to-date statement:

[https://cihe.neasc.org/sites/cihe.neasc.org/files/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111\\_Policy\\_On\\_Credits-And-Degrees.pdf](https://cihe.neasc.org/sites/cihe.neasc.org/files/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111_Policy_On_Credits-And-Degrees.pdf)

To complete this course, students will need to dedicate, at a minimum, the following amount of time to the listed activities:

<b>Assignments/Activities</b>	<b>Engagement Estimate</b>	<b>Engagement Hours</b>
Course readings	412 pages x 8 min. per page	55 hours
Midterm exam	8 hours	8 hours
Group presentation	6 hours	12 hours
Class attendance	3 hours x 15 weeks	45
Review Power Points	30 hours	30 hours
Final Presentation	12 hours	18
Homework review	12 hours preparation	12
News Review	½ hour per week	7.5
Final Exam	12 hours	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>199,5 HOURS</b>

**Textbook/Course Materials:**

David E. Lorey (ed.) (2003) *Global Environmental Challenges of the Twenty-First Century: Resources, Consumption and Sustainable Solutions*, Scholarly Resources.

Simon Nicholson and Paul Wapner (2014) *Global Environmental Politics: From Person to Planet*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Other materials, as well as the class slides, will also be available on BlackBoard before the midterm and final exams (this may include articles from books or print media). Also follow current events with magazines and periodicals: The Economist, Time, The Guardian, El País...etc.

**Course Goals & Learning Objectives:**

<b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will know/understand</b>	<b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to</b>	<b>How the student will be assessed on these learning objectives:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know &amp; become familiar with the global environmental issues that need to be addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to explain the major issues, including location and causes.</li> <li>• Describe the degree of impact on whom and what.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated knowledge of the readings in class discussion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the central role of politics in the environmental future of the Earth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expose causes &amp; effects of policy decisions.</li> <li>• Cite principal actors &amp; their vested interests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active, appropriate and positive class participation</li> <li>• Possible pop quizzes on the readings, as necessary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the tools available for analyzing the social causes &amp; consequences of environmental problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research &amp; collect accurate information using the Internet and other media, scientific literature, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final presentation with bibliographical references</li> <li>• Weekly press clippings</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the relationship between demographics and environmental issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show understanding of demographic patterns</li> <li>• Explain their role and impact upon the environmental issues being studied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pop quizzes on the readings, as necessary</li> <li>• Possible assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the principal scientific arguments related to the environmental issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name key researchers &amp; explain their theories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible pop quizzes on the readings, as necessary.</li> </ul>

<b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will know/understand</b>	<b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to</b>	<b>How the student will be assessed on these learning objectives:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the principal measures, opportunities &amp; failures regarding environmental protection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize principal decisions on environmental governance from a historical perspective.</li> <li>• List organizations &amp; key players involved.</li> <li>• Explain reasons for the success/failure of environmental protection measures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Midterm exam</li> <li>• Final exam</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to think realistically &amp; critically about environmental challenges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguish reliable resources of information &amp; data</li> <li>• Distance themselves from the mainstream information aired by the media &amp; opinion leaders.</li> <li>• Elaborate grounded arguments for discussion &amp; debate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly press clippings</li> <li>• In-class discussion &amp; debate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship of the environment to their own lives.</li> <li>• The individual as well as communitarian responsibilities for the situation of the planet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value the importance of natural resources.</li> <li>• Apply the knowledge gained to daily life.</li> <li>• Distinguish sustainable from non-sustainable practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-class presentation of paper</li> <li>• Possible assignments</li> </ul>

### **Assignments/Exams/Papers/Projects:**

Students will be evaluated in the following areas:

- ✓ Exams: Midterm and Final
- ✓ Group Presentation: Planetary Boundary Group Presentation
- ✓ Individual Presentation: One in-class presentation. Days and order of presentations will be provided by instructor
- ✓ Weekly press clipping and news commentary, quizzes

Selected assignments in this course may be used by our accreditation team for institutional assessment purposes and will be handled confidentially.

### **Grading/Evaluation:**

- ✓ Midterm exam: 20%
- ✓ Assignments and quizzes: 20%
- ✓ Paper and Presentation: 20%
- ✓ Final exam: 30%
- ✓ Instructor's evaluation of the student's participation in class discussions: 10%

Late assignments will be graded 5% down for each delayed day (24 hours).

### **Course and Classroom Policies:**

Respect for all religions, ideologies, ethnic groups and gender is most expected. Be open, respectful and engaged.

Punctuality is needed. Tardiness is at best a rude disruption to your fellow classmates who are punctual.

Cell phones may not be used in class.

No food or drink (except water) is allowed in class.

### **Participation/Attendance Policy:**

The SUMC Student Handbook states the following:

*Once a student is registered for a course, attendance at every meeting of every class is expected, including those held in the first week of the semester. A maximum of two unjustified absences is permitted. Each additional absence will cause the final course grade to be lowered by one-third of a letter grade, i.e., from A to A-; A- to B+; B+ to B, etc.*

*Excessive absences in a course will have a negative effect on the final grade. When a student is absent, the quality of his or her work in a course will deteriorate since material missed in class sessions can rarely be made up satisfactorily, even though the student remains responsible for that work.*

*Please note that even when a student has a justified reason for missing class, such as illness, the negative academic impact on learning will be the same as if the absence were for spurious reasons.*

In this course, any absence due to illness should be justified by a note from the student's physician or other health professional confirming the day(s) on which the student was unable to attend class. A written excuse from a student's host parent or residence supervisor is also acceptable.

In the event that a class meeting is unexpectedly cancelled, students will be expected to continue with readings or other assignments as originally scheduled. Any assignments due or class activities (e.g., a quiz, exam or presentation) planned for such a cancelled class are due at the next class meeting unless other instructions are communicated.

Attendance is a must. 10% of your final grade will be given on your participation in class. Keep this numbers in mind

You are required to attend each class session prepared to participate and think critically during lecture and discussion sessions. I will value creativity and constructive criticism.

All required assignments must be submitted on time. Late assignments will be graded 5% down for each delayed day (24 hours).

Any work submitted by e-mail must have its receipt acknowledged by the instructor.

Anyone who has any trouble attending class or delivering work on time should speak to me beforehand. Do not hesitate to e-mail me in that case.

### **Disability Statement:**

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in my classroom.

If formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at the main Campus in Boston so that I am notified of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations. Check the ODS web site at [www.suffolk.edu/disability](http://www.suffolk.edu/disability) for information on accommodations.

### **Student Resources:**

SUMC provides a range of student services, both academic and personal. To learn more about course-related tutorials and academic workshops, refer to the SUMC Student Handbook, Section 2 "Academic Policies and Services". Section 5, "Living in Madrid", contains information on the medical and mental health resources, including an English-speaking therapist, available to you.

### **Midterm Review:**

At midterm, around week 6, you will be given a midterm grade based on performance on assignments, quizzes and midterm exam. Midterm grades of C- or below will be reported to the Madrid Campus Academic Standing Committee, with an explanation of what I believe has contributed to that grade: excessive absences, poor time management or study skills, lack of effort, difficulty with the course material or with writing or language skills, etc. The Academic Standing Committee or I may contact you to suggest strategies

for addressing these difficulties. I strongly encourage you to visit me during my office hours so we may discuss how you can be successful in this class.

**Academic Misconduct:**

[www.suffolk.edu/about/mission-history/policies-procedures/academic-misconduct-policy](http://www.suffolk.edu/about/mission-history/policies-procedures/academic-misconduct-policy)

Suffolk University expects all students to be responsible individuals with high standards of conduct. Students are expected to practice ethical behavior in all learning environments and scenarios, including classrooms and laboratories, internships and practica, and study groups and academic teams. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, use of unauthorized electronic devices, self-plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, and other types of academic misconduct are treated as serious offenses that initiate a formal process of inquiry, one that may lead to disciplinary sanctions.

Student work will be thoroughly examined for academic integrity and may be scanned using plagiarism detection software. A faculty member suspecting academic misconduct will contact the student using the Suffolk email address to schedule a meeting and will make all effort to do so within five business days of detecting the incident. During the meeting, the faculty member will present the documentation that led to suspected academic misconduct. Resolution of the incident will be according to the procedures outlined in the SUMC Student Handbook.

**Academic Grievances Policy:**

[www.suffolk.edu/student-life/student-services/student-handbook/university-policies-for-student-cas-sbs/grievances-academics](http://www.suffolk.edu/student-life/student-services/student-handbook/university-policies-for-student-cas-sbs/grievances-academics)

**Course Schedule:**

The schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better student learning.

<b>Week</b>	<b>General Topic of lesson</b>	<b>Readings (in addition to the course books)</b>
1	Introduction to the course. Rules of the game.	
2	Main environmental concepts/ challenges, Antropocene, Planetary Boundaries	Rockstrom, et al, 2012. A safe operating space for humanity, Nature PDF File <a href="#">Resilience centre publications</a>
3	<b>GROUP PRESENTATIONS</b>	
4	Understand complexities	
	Tragedy of the Common	<a href="#">TED video</a> , Elinor Ostrom Nobel Prize in Economics <a href="#">Lecture</a> , Hardin <a href="#">publication</a> in Science.
5	Doughnut Economy	<a href="#">Doughnut Economy web</a> (choose the best ways to learn (by watching video, reading blog, article or podcast). Documentary: <a href="#">Economics of Happiness</a>
5	Good life for all	O'Neill et al, 2018. A good life for all within planetary boundaries, Nature PDF File
6	Start talking about solutions. History of Environmental Protection & principles	
6	Concept of Sustainable Development Study Visit or guest (tbc)	<a href="#">UN SDGs page</a>
7	Review for the Midterm	
7	<b>MIDTERM EXAM. CLASS TIME.</b>	

<b>Week</b>	<b>General Topic of lesson</b>	<b>Readings (in addition to the course books)</b>
8	Different levels of sustainability governance (me, groups, organizations, NGOs, private sector, government)	Documentaries: <u>Before the flood</u> , <u>This changes everything</u> <u>This changes everything cases</u>
		Brown, T. (2008). <u>Design thinking</u> . <i>Harvard business review</i> , 86(6), 84-92, 141. Brown, T. (2008). <u>Tales of creativity and play</u> .
	Documentary Searching4Opportunities	
9	Working with Individual Projects II	To be confirmed
9	Private Sector Innovations	Documentary: <u>No business as usual</u>
10	Working with Individual Projects III <b>(DRAFT PRESENTATIONS)</b>	
11	Working with Individual Projects IV	
13	Study Visit	
14	<b>FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS</b>	
15	Wrap up. Review for the Final. What have we learnt?	
16	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	